



—NEW YORK STATE SENATOR—  
**Jeremy Cooney**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**SENATOR COONEY HONORS ROBERT RAPONE AS 2021 NYS SENATE VETERANS  
HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE**

**(Rochester, NY)-** Today, **Senator Jeremy Cooney (D-Rochester)** recognized 2021 New York State Senate Veterans Hall of Fame inductee Robert Rapone. This honor is one of the highest bestowed by the NYS Senate.

Sergeant Rapone proudly served two tours in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War, earning the Vietnam Parachute Wings with a Combat Jump Star, two Combat Air Medals, the Purple Heart, and the Bronze Star with Valor. Today, Robert is actively involved in his community, most notably as a Life Member and Past Commander of the Hilton/Parma VFW & Matthew Cleary Post 255. Additionally, Robert holds membership to the Sons of the American Revolution and the Disabled American Veterans. Robert serves as an advocate for veteran's mental health, often traveling across Monroe County with his service dog Casper in tow to share his experience and advocate for PTSD therapy for veterans.

The New York State Senate Veterans' Hall of Fame was created to honor and recognize outstanding veterans from the Empire State who have distinguished themselves both in military and civilian life. Their meritorious service to our nation deserves the special recognition that only a Hall of Fame can provide, as a fitting expression of our gratitude and admiration.

**Senator Jeremy Cooney:**

“It is an honor to recognize Robert Rapone as an inductee to the New York State Senate's Veterans Hall of Fame. After an exemplary career in the Army, Sergeant Rapone returned home and continued to serve through leadership roles in local veterans organizations and sharing his story to raise awareness for veteran mental health. Robert humbly served our country, not for recognition, but because to him, it was simply the right thing to do. I am proud to celebrate Robert Rappone's service to our country and community.”

**Laura Stradley, Executive Director, Rochester Veterans Outreach Center:**

“At Veterans Outreach Center, we are so appreciative to Senator Cooney for recognizing the important contributions of our military men and women. We are especially pleased that he has taken the time to honor Robert Rapone, a veteran of the United States Army, by nominating him for induction into the NY State Senate Veterans Hall of Fame. This is a special recognition that is only given to a select few veterans across the state each year, and we are glad to see Robert added to this group. Thank you to Senator Cooney for his leadership and Robert Rapone for his military service!”

**Robert Rapone, 2021 NYS Senate Veterans Hall of Fame Inductee:**

“I would like to thank Senator Cooney for awarding me this honor and also thank Tucker , Sally, and Mel for nominating me. Growing up right after WWII in a military family my parents instilled in me the privilege I had living in this great Country, and to do my best to honor and serve not only my country but also my family and community. So again I thank everyone for this honor. Senator Cooney, my family, and my great friends.”